

his father, Rev. Dr. Willis M. Hickerson and was called to become a preacher at a young age.

Through his ministry, he has many accomplishments. The Reverend helped revitalize the youth ministry of his home church in Pennsylvania, significantly increased church membership wherever he has served, established various mission ministries and invigorated the commitment to God in every community he has served.

Chaplain Hickerson is a proud husband of Mrs. Hickerson, where they live a happy life raising their daughter, Octavia Belle. He has learned, served, preached and taught nationally and internationally and is currently the seventh pastor of the historic Springfield Baptist Church of Washington, DC.

On behalf of Washington's Eighth Congressional District, it is my pleasure to introduce our Guest Chaplain for today, Rev. Dr. Carl Que Hickerson.

RECOGNIZING THE VICTIMS AND TRAGEDY CAUSED BY RECENT STORMS

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn recognition of a tragedy that took place in my home State of Illinois and throughout the Midwest last week. On February 29th, storms ravaged homes and businesses leaving 39 people dead due to the severe weather that swept through the middle of the country.

I offer my condolences to the families who have lost loved ones in this tragedy. I know that my words offer little in the way of comfort, but I must offer them, for the families that have been affected are in my thoughts and prayers. The lives taken in these recent events are truly a misfortune to behold. I mourn the lives lost and feel heartfelt sorrow for the families that have been denied future time with their loved ones. I ask my countrymen for their assistance to help alleviate the anguish of the victims of this disaster, either through volunteering or by being there for your neighbor in their time of need.

While it is difficult to find positives amidst such a catastrophe, upon further examination, admiration and honor should be recognized. As we can see across the country, there are stories of courage, generosity, selflessness, and kindness. These acts deserve our praise. At this moment, there are people volunteering to help rebuild communities that have been damaged and destroyed. Such communities are a representation of a cause greater than one's self. By helping to rebuild a neighborhood people are demonstrating their belief in an altruistic form of living. I offer my admiration to the volunteers' courage and sacrifices made in the face of extreme adversity. I thank the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Team Rubicon, and other organizations for their efforts during this crisis. Their support has proven to me that these storms may destroy homes, level businesses, and take valuable lives in the process, but they cannot destroy the human spirit. One person's willpower is stronger than wooden buildings, brick founda-

tions, and steel structures. During times of great hardship, Americans have routinely made a determined effort to move forward. So, to all those that have been affected by this tragedy: victims, rescuers, and volunteers alike, may God bless you all.

ON THE RETIREMENT OF C-SPAN FOUNDER AND CEO BRIAN LAMB

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Brian Lamb, the founder and CEO of C-SPAN, who recently announced his decision to retire.

Mr. Lamb founded the non-profit educational network 34 years ago and since then has worked tirelessly to bring live coverage of government and politics to the American people. Before Mr. Lamb created C-SPAN, most Americans had to rely exclusively on news reports about what their representatives said and did in Washington. Because of his vision, millions of Americans everyday can see and hear government in action for themselves. I have had the privilege of working with Mr. Lamb over the years and I am a proud supporter of his efforts to make government transparent and accessible.

I commend Mr. Lamb for his vision, humility and his commitment to educating Americans about history and the government. I wish him all the best in his future career endeavors. I commend the following article to my colleagues.

C-SPAN FOUNDER LAMB STEPS DOWN AFTER 34 YEARS

(By Paul Farhi)

Want to know just how purposefully unglamorous and resolutely non-partisan is C-SPAN, the pioneering public-affairs TV network founded by Brian Lamb in 1978?

Consider this: In countless appearances spanning thousands of hours of interviews and call-in programs, Lamb has never once uttered his own name on the air. Too showy. Too much like regular TV, which is what Lamb, a stolid Hoosier, has always sought to avoid.

"No one does that here," he protested on Monday. "We just don't do it. It's always been part of our mission not to make us the center of attention . . . We're the antithesis of everything you see on commercial television."

So Lamb, typically, also wasn't making a big deal about the news C-SPAN buried in the second paragraph of a news announcement it issued in the dead of Sunday evening: that after 34 years as C-SPAN chief executive, he's stepping down from running the Washington-based operation he conceived and built.

Lamb, 70, isn't fading away entirely. He'll continue as executive chairman of the non-profit organization and as host of "Q & A," his Sunday interview program. He also plans to continue teaching, primarily at Purdue University, his alma mater.

But he's handing over day-to-day operations to two successors-in-waiting: current co-presidents Rob Kennedy, 55, and Susan Swain, 57, both longtime C-SPAN hands.

"This has been something I've wanted to do for a while," Lamb said. "I wanted an orderly transition when everyone was ambulatory and standing up, with some thought behind it."

Lamb was a young naval officer in the 1960s who used to slip over to the Capitol from the Washington Navy Yard to watch floor debates in the House and Senate. He later served as a telecommunications staffer in the Johnson and Nixon administrations and as a press secretary for Colorado Sen. Peter Dominick (R).

As the Washington bureau chief of the cable TV trade magazine Cablevision in the 1970s, Lamb cooked up the idea for a network that would cover, with utter dispassion, the congressional debates that he'd witnessed during his Navy days. Lamb rustled up the money from some public relations-conscious cable barons and set about convincing the House to let TV cameras onto the floor.

C-SPAN, which stands for Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network, was among the first nationally distributed cable channels, following after the debut of HBO, Showtime, Pat Robertson's CBN Network, and WTBS, Ted Turner's "super station." It is now composed of three networks, plus a Washington radio station (WCSP, 90.1 FM), and a massive and historically rich video archive of congressional sessions, hearings, speeches, campaign rallies, think-tank conferences, author interviews and what-have-yous from C-SPAN over the years.

Lamb holds the distinction of being the only one of those early network founders not to become a billionaire from his creation. On the other hand, he says, "I never wanted to be rich. I wasn't the slightest bit interested in that."

He had to settle instead for helping to revolutionize the political culture of Washington. What MTV did for popular music—that is, helped make it theatrical and visual—C-SPAN did for Congress and the wonks who follow it.

C-SPAN's gavel-to-gavel coverage of the House changed the spontaneous, free-wheeling debates on the floor into more scripted and polished speeches played for the TV cameras, said Charles Johnson, a former House parliamentarian. Members became conscious that their words weren't just going into the Congressional Record; they now had an audience at home, leading to charts and props and camera-friendly displays that hadn't existed before.

It also led to an increase in grandstanding. In 1984, the fiery, after-hours speeches of a young Republican backbencher named Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) so angered House Speaker Tip O'Neill (D-Mass.) that he ordered the House cameras (then as now under House control) to pan the empty chamber in an effort to embarrass Gingrich.

Nevertheless, after disdaining to follow the House for more than six years, the Senate finally relented and let C-SPAN carry its proceedings live in 1986.

Having the cameras on hand "changed the quality of the oratory," said Johnson, avoiding direct judgment on whether it did so in a good or bad way.

Lamb says he doesn't care either way: "If there's a public meeting, there ought to be cameras there," he says. "Those meetings are paid for by we, the taxpayers. People should be able to see what [the elected officials] look like, what the buildings look like, what language they're using."

Through all those decades, Lamb has been the continuous thread: unflashy, unemotional, "a video Buddha, television's most stationary being," in the words of one magazine writer. In 23 years of hosting "Booknotes," his author-interview show, for example, he notes that he never missed a single Sunday night, for 52 weeks every year. In total, he's logged more hours on national TV than perhaps any person in America.

He's not bragging about that, of course. Or much else.